

25 May 1982

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

FROM : Hal Ford

SUBJECT: Comment on DCI's Memo, "Estimates"

1. Welcome his interest; invite him to ongoing, periodic discussion of these questions with the NIC--occasionally in plenary with the NIO's. Also, I agree with Dave Gries' point about estimates as Cadillacs.

2. Suggest to DCI that in response to PFIAB (or whomever) he might best stress not the gaps, but the very positive aspects of estimates and NIC policy support of the present and the past year or so--the best, most relevant, etc., which has existed to date.

3. There have always been gaps, and of necessity there will continue to be. There is only so much time and so many people. A prime function of the NIC (and past NIC's) has been to help the DCI pursue truly priority items. That, of course, means that something has to give.

4. Here the record of the estimates has been an excellent one, especially of late. There are no key issues which have been left bare. Those subjects not treated have been secondary (e.g., Argentina prior to Falklands), or not very relevant to today's world (e.g., International Communism). The very relevant subject of nuclear proliferation, for example, has been treated extensively in the recent past and at present.

5. Remind the DCI that the NIE's are not the whole production show (per this a.m.'s discussion).

6. Inform the DCI that years ago the AG numbered 25-30; Nowadays we do what we can with our present 10-person AG. The record with respect to non-NIC drafters continues to be very much a hit-or-miss proposition. There simply has to be a NIC-type staff, a batch of broad-gauged, very able officers who are sensitive to policy consumer interests, and who can in quick time conceive, write, check, and help manage the production of estimative materials. This can best be done--as has been demonstrated to the DCI--by having our own stable of [redacted]-type NIC officers. We can't take our chances, especially in important, fast-track situations, on maybe getting the borrowed services of an outside drafter who may or may not be able to produce the type and quality of work we need.

25X1

SECRET

7. Yes, an estimate on Argentina after Falklands is an obvious must.

25X1

8. Syria, etc.--as discussed--is being treated in projects just finished or underway.

9. Invite more what-if SNIEs from the policymakers

Hal Ford

cc: VC/NIC  
EXO/NIC  
HPF Chrono  
NIC/AG/

25X1